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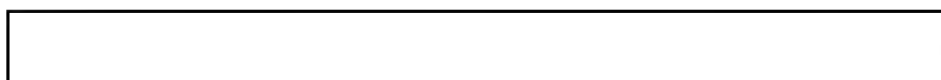
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Poland: Several thousand militant students in Warsaw have rejected Gomulka's vague offers of conciliation in his speech on 19 March.

Students of the Warsaw Polytechnic Institute decided at a mass meeting yesterday to begin a 48-hour sit-in strike this morning. They charged that Gomulka's imprecise offer to examine student demands was not responsive to their resolution of last week.

Large crowds of nonstudents were barred from entering the institute grounds, but there was no violence. Abnormal numbers of police still patrol the city, but are less conspicuous than any time since street demonstrations began on 8 March. Armed soldiers apparently have been withdrawn.

Students in Krakow, who have been boycotting classes since 15 March, reportedly are continuing their defiance. They shifted to sit-ins after being threatened with expulsion if they stayed away from classes.

Gomulka's speech was an effort to buy time in order to re-establish some stability. New eruptions from disaffected students and intellectuals or even a prolonged tug of war with them will make his task even harder and weaken his influence over party factions.



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Southern Yemen: Tensions between factions in the National Liberation Front Command may have led to a coup attempt yesterday.

A military curfew was put into effect early in the morning of 20 March, roadblocks were set up, and army vehicles positioned outside President Qahtan al-Shaabi's residence. The initial broadcasts from Aden radio gave the impression that some action was being taken in the name of the front and the army.

Later an "important statement" was broadcast abrogating earlier pronouncements by the army command. The statement was made by the foreign minister in the name of the President, implying a restoration of civilian authority.

In the afternoon, Aden radio announced a meeting of all members of the front's general command at the President's residence. The meeting broke up with no public announcement, but the President subsequently broadcast a calming statement which, however, did nothing to clarify the situation.

Aden is quiet, and the curfew has been lifted. The streets are reportedly being patrolled by elements of both the army and the people's guard, apparently working together.

Reasons for the flare-up are obscure. The regime may have called on the army to forestall a coup attempt by extremist members of the front command, ousted at a party congress ten days ago. Another possibility is that the army acted to avert a possible purge of its own ranks in the wake of the dismissal on 19 March of some 150 senior civil servants.

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USSR-France: The USSR is considering plans to put a communications satellite into an orbit over the equator and has invited the French to participate.

According to the French, the Soviet proposal was made during recent Franco-Soviet talks on space co-operation and included joint development of the satellite. It would be launched in about two years.

An operation of this type would be a milestone in the Soviet space program. Although the Soviets almost certainly possess the necessary technology, they have never attempted such an orbit--a much more difficult and expensive undertaking than the launch of a Molniya communications satellite. A satellite in the 22,000-mile-high circular orbit required for the project would remain stationary over a point on the equator.

Over the past several years France and the USSR have discussed a number of space projects. Except for the experimental relay of television by Soviet Molniya satellites, however, there have been few tangible results.

Maurice Schumann, French minister of state for scientific research, reportedly is opposed to the latest Soviet proposal. The Soviet motives in making the offer are unclear; Moscow might be seeking to drive a wedge into the International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium which operates the world-wide satellite system. As a member of the consortium, France has agreed not to make commercial use of any other communications satellite system.

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Egypt: The cabinet shuffle announced yesterday may fall short of popular expectations of a dramatic political reform.

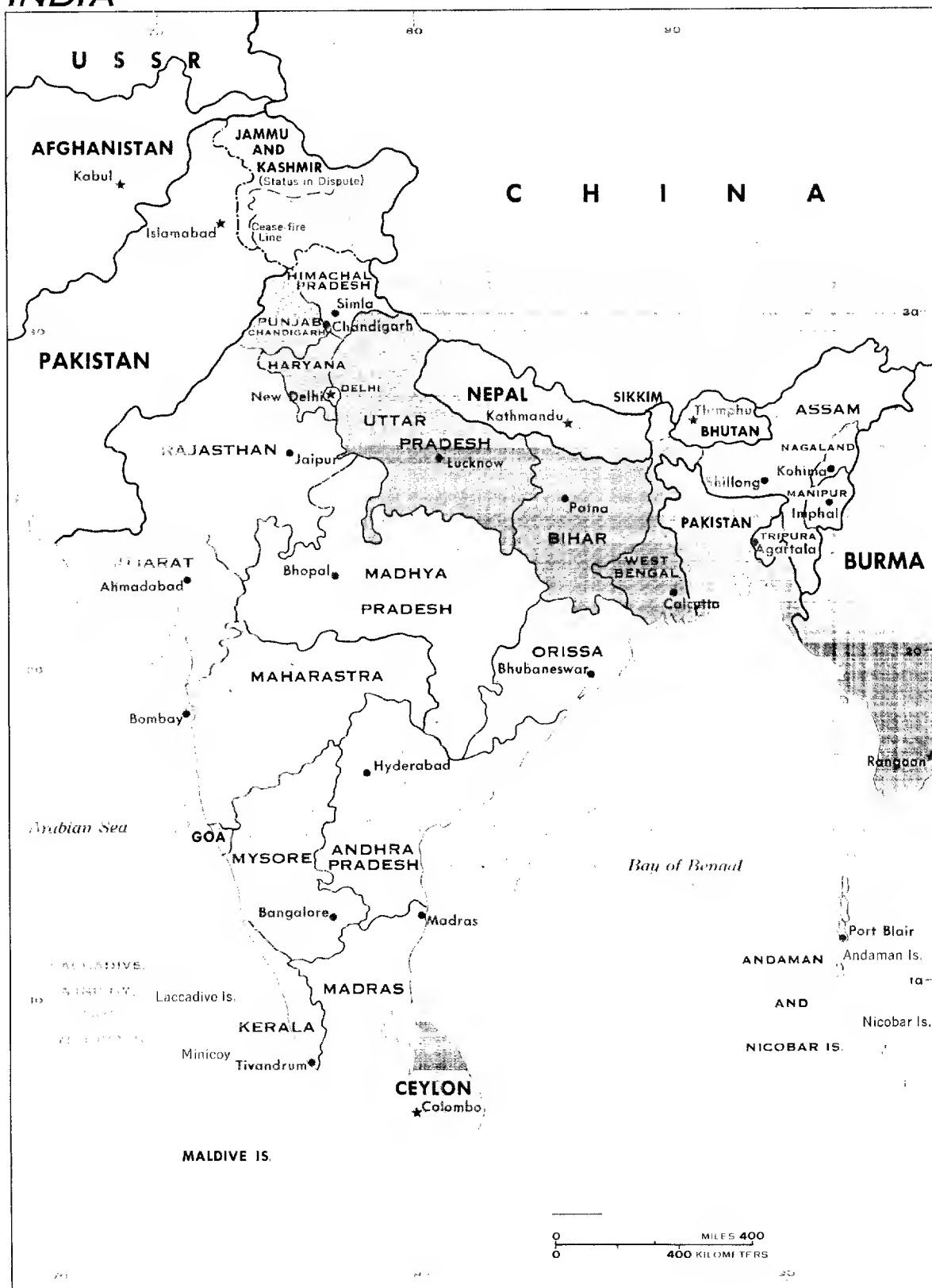
Thirteen newcomers, almost all technicians and academicians, have been appointed to head the less important ministries. Nasir retains the presidency and premiership. The left-leaning Ali Sabry was dropped from his position as deputy premier, but may still retain his post as head of Egypt's mass political movement, the Arab Socialist Union. The most significant change is the resignation of the moderate Zakaria Moheiddin from all his posts, including a deputy premiership.

Further changes and a clarification of what Nasir intends for the new government may be announced during a major address he is billed to make in the near future.

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INDIA



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India: Two more states are undergoing parliamentary crises.

This political chaos raises the prospect that the entire northern tier of states may soon be under direct rule by New Delhi. The government in Bihar, in existence only two months, fell on 18 March. A group of defectors from the governing party voted with Congress Party legislators who had been backing the regime on a confidence motion. The Punjab is also in the midst of a prolonged parliamentary crisis which is cutting deeply into the effectiveness of representative government in that important agricultural state.

Direct rule--which has already been imposed on West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Haryana--may be the only means of restoring stable government to these states.  (Map)

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Uruguay: "Lightning" demonstrations, some probably directed against US business and government offices, have been scheduled for 26 March in Montevideo in connection with a Communist-sponsored rally in support of North Vietnam. The Communists are now successfully inciting short strikes on economic issues and hope to extend the labor agitation to include political protest. Some incidents of violence are likely, but the government should be able to control the situation.

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*Guatemala: Archbishop Casariego, who had been held captive since last Saturday by as yet unidentified kidnapers, was returned unharmed yesterday. Casariego was released in the southwestern city of Quetzaltenango and flown to the capital by military aircraft.

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